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PP RUEHFK
DE RUEHKO #1424 0760533
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 170533Z MAR 06
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9868
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
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RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 5189
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 8329
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1185
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STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION DPRK ABDUCTIONS - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: Most Friday morning papers front-paged the National Security report announced Thursday by President Bush, which the president said shows that Iran poses the biggest challenge for the US.

¶1. "Strengthening Solidarity Against DPRK Abductions" The conservative Sankei editorialized (3/17): "Ambassador Schieffer visited Niigata Prefecture Thursday and inspected the location where North Korean agents kidnapped Megumi Yokota in 1977. This was an expression of strong will on the part of the US not to allow North Korea's kidnappings to go unchallenged.... Megumi's mother Sakie Yokota and others are scheduled to appear in the US House of Representatives in late April, making this the first time for family members of the abductees to testify before Congress, although they have spoken at the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva.... Tokyo needs persistent diplomatic efforts to urge Beijing and Seoul, both of which are taking a conciliatory position toward Pyongyang, to join with Japan and Western countries to resolve the abduction issue."

SCHIEFFER